

Community Facilities



A traditional community with an entrepreneurial spirit, yet a somewhat neglected one, is positioned for great strides in educational and other community facility opportunities.

Rural Open space Slow pace Pioneer attitude Low density Water & natural resources Rivas Family values Multi-generational Cultural diversity Community Returning professionals Perez Historic Pride Independence Self-sufficient Unregulated Urban and county culture De la Garza Lack of regulation Growth concerns Great potential Apprehensive Losoya Greenbelts connecting rivers and creeks Preserve agriculture Town centers with mixed use Martinez East-west connections Texas A&M University campus Concentrated industrial uses Ruiz Commercial nodes Public transportation connections Diverse housing Montes de Oca Rural Open space Slow pace Pioneer attitude Low density Water & natural resources Rivas Family values Multi-generational Cultural diversity Community Returning professionals Perez Historic Pride Independence Self-sufficient Unregulated Urban and county culture De la Garza Lack of regulation Growth concerns Great potential Apprehensive Losoya Greenbelts connecting rivers and creeks Preserve agriculture Town centers with mixed use Martinez East-west connections Texas A&M University campus Rural Open space Slow pace Pioneer attitude Low density Water & natural resources Rivas Family values Multi-generational Cultural diversity Community Returning professionals Perez Historic Pride Independence Self-sufficient Unregulated Urban and county culture De la Garza Lack of regulation Growth concerns Great potential Apprehensive Losoya Greenbelts connecting rivers and creeks Preserve agriculture Town centers with mixed use Martinez East-west connections Texas A&M University campus Rural Open space Slow pace Pioneer attitude Low density Water & natural resources Rivas Family values Multi-generational Cultural diversity Community Returning professionals Perez Historic Pride Independence Self-sufficient Unregulated Urban and county culture De la Garza Lack of regulation Growth concerns Great potential Apprehensive Losoya Greenbelts connecting rivers and creeks Preserve agriculture Town centers with mixed use Martinez East-west connections Texas A&M University campus

Introduction

Key Community Issues

Goals and Objectives

Education

- Schools & Colleges
- Libraries

Emergency and Medical Services

- Health Services
- Fire Services
- Law Enforcement

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Community facilities and public services play a quiet but important role in the lives of area residents. Law enforcement, fire protection and emergency assistance are all essential functions of both urban and rural areas. In addition, schools, libraries and other community facilities offer benefits for present and future generations and will be a resource to promote economic development in the area. Many communities have chosen to promote their high quality public facilities as indicators of the community's overall strength and civic order.

In recent years, San Antonio and Bexar County area voters have selected to improve such public services through bond elections and through the creation of emergency service districts. Future participation of area residents in such elections, will help ensure that the Southside Community is well served by the City of San Antonio and Bexar County.

The cost is crucial to planning adequate public facilities, however, they are also a variable of the time, location and character of future development in the area. By planning growth in advance, it is possible to proactively plan for new and expanded services and facilities and therefore meet the needs and expectations of the area's growing population. Demographic characteristics also need to be factored in when planning future developments. Regional demographic trends include increasing affluence, decreasing average household size, and an aging population.

The community facilities element of the Community Plan is linked to other elements of the Plan since projected population and industrial growth, future land use, and transportation depend on the provision of adequate public facilities.

Key Community Issues:

Need for community centers/public services (libraries, medical facilities, health & safety, police & fire)

Locate neighborhood schools that provide connectivity to residential areas

Set aside future infrastructure for school planning needs

GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Expand Educational opportunities in general planning area through the location of a Texas A&M University campus, and the specific planning areas, through the location of neighborhood based schools and libraries

- Set aside infrastructure/land for schools within neighborhoods to allow children to walk to school
- Locate libraries in neighborhood centers to serve a growing population as neighborhoods develop

Expand emergency and medical services

- Provide for and consider the location of emergency and medical facilities in centrally located regional or neighborhood centers that are accessible and appropriately scaled.

Preserve natural character of parks and open space to provide recreational opportunities for families

- Provide open spaces in town squares
- Develop neighborhood parks
- Provide for hike and bike trails along the Medina River and other waterways

Background

Community Facilities in the Southside Community are delivered from a variety of service providers including the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, four different school districts, volunteer fire departments, and also the private sector. A unified plan to integrate services stands to not only benefit area residents and businesses, but can provide administrative savings to the service providers.

Table 6 - Service Delivery

Service Provider	Service Delivered
Bexar Met	Water and sewer
City of San Antonio	Community Initiatives, Code Enforcement, Economic Development, Fire, Libraries, Metro Health, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Police, Signs, Solid Waste, Subdivisions, Tree Preservation, Zoning
City Public Service	Electric and gas utility
East Central ISD	Public Schools
Private Sector	Garbage collection, volunteer fire, health providers, schools, propane
San Antonio River Authority	San Antonio River
San Antonio Water System	Water and sewer, watershed protection
Somerset ISD	Public Schools
Southside ISD	Public Schools
Southwest ISD	Public Schools
Texas A&M Univ. System	Junior and Senior level courses at Palo Alto College Future flagship university campus proposed
VIA Metropolitan	Public transit provider

In anticipation of annexation of the Southside Community, the Planning Department has conducted a thorough inventory of existing and planning community facilities for the area. This includes community health services, fire protection and emergency medical services.

EDUCATION

Schools are important community resources and symbols of community aspirations. As such, they should be designed in accordance with the smart growth goals of compact development, multi-use development, open space conservation and pedestrian and transit accessibility. They should be designed to enhance pedestrian and transit access from the surrounding area, use no more land than is necessary, and be contiguous to or within urbanizing areas. Schools and their grounds should be inte-

grated into the community's system of conserved open spaces and ample thought should be given to the multiple use of school facilities and land.

As school districts encounter rapid growth, new financing and programmatic tools must be made available to support the educational requirements for new residential development in the Southside Initiative area. As an example, a recent bill introduced in the Texas House of Representatives required a land allocation to school districts for school facilities or an impact fee imposed on new

residential construction to fund land acquisition. Although the bill was not considered, it reflected the tremendous impact of new residential construction on school district growth. Innovative alternative schools should also be considered. For example, restructuring the size and composition of school facilities would allow students to attend the same neighborhood school from grades K-8, so that the learning atmosphere cultivates more interpersonal communication between students, teachers, and administrators.

Another programmatic tool is the development of partnerships between the City, the school districts, and the private sector to create job training centers, school to work programs, and other innovative initiatives.

In livable neighborhoods, schools usually play an important and key role. They are where neighborhood meetings take place, people go to vote, local music and theater groups perform and sports events are held. For families with children,

schools function as centers of social interaction.

In the year 2000, Texas A&M University-Kingsville opened a branch college at the Southside campus, offering junior and senior level courses. Should Palo Alto College's enrollment increase to a threshold that would warrant a four year university in the Southside Initiative planning area, Texas A&M University has considered establishing a flagship campus. This will provide an invaluable resource to this



area, not only to educate the community's youth but it may also provide lifetime learning opportunities for residents and programs to assist area businesses.

Community Schools and Colleges

There are three primary independent school districts located within the planning area, however the majority of the area is located within the Southside and Southwest Independent School Districts (ISD). In recent years, the Southside and Southwest Independent School Districts have experienced continual growth in enrollments and are expected to grow by more than 10 percent in the next years. As of today, the schools in these Independent School Districts are situated outside of the Southside planning area.

School District	2001-02 Enrollment	Projected Enrollment
Southside ISD	4,650	6,092 (2006-07)
Southwest ISD	9,140	10,185 (2005-06)
East Central ISD	7,794	

Immediately north of the planning area is Palo Alto College, a part of the Alamo Community College District. Palo Alto College was the culmination of a struggle that began in earnest in November 1982 when Southside community leaders and the Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) organization approached Alamo Community College District trustees to build a third college in underserved, predominantly Hispanic South San Antonio community. Trustees established the college on February 21, 1983, and the Texas Legislature chartered the college on March 19, 1983.

Palo Alto College began holding classes in 1985, and two years later in 1987, the Mission-style campus opened north of Loop 410 near State Highway 16. The new college attracted students from across Bexar



and adjoining counties, and in 1991, was named the fastest growing college in Texas. Agribusiness was added to the core curriculum in 1995. Consistent increases in enrollment have prompted much physical growth, specifically through the construction of new facilities for added classroom space as well as sports and recreation. The college now encompasses 274,491 square feet on 126 acres. The campus features a world class Natatorium, the George Ozuna Jr. Learning Resources and Academic Computing Center, and the Ray Ellison Family Center, a child care facility. Palo Alto currently has an enrollment of more than 7,000 students.

Community Libraries

Public libraries are no longer defined merely by their materials collections, although one-third of the books read in this country come from libraries. Now libraries may also be defined by the



possibilities they offer for accessing information resources.

The San Antonio Public Library operates 20 branch libraries that range in size from 4000 to 12,500 square feet. These facilities are located throughout the City and serve populations ranging from 35,000 to 75,000 people.

The locations and size of the branches have enabled them to be responsive to the unique information needs of their communities while relying on the Central Library to provide in-depth

resources on a wide variety of subjects.

On August 26, 1996, the Library Board of Trustees affirmed its commitment to neighborhood-based branches similar to those that make up the library system. Although the Board recognized that future branches might need to be larger (15,000 – 20,000 sq. ft.) than the current facilities, the Board did not endorse the concept of large regional branch libraries.

Location Standards

The location of a branch library is an essential factor in determining the usage of the facility. Therefore, it is important to select a site which best meets the following criteria:

1. Be located in an area that is frequently visited by all segment of the community
2. Offer easy and safe vehicular and pedestrian access
3. Should be easily accessible by public and private transportation
4. Permit the library to be highly visible
5. The surrounding land use should complement library use in terms of function, peak use times and traffic patterns. Current and potential usage of adjacent properties should be investigated
6. Allow for adequate parking, landscaping and setbacks, for future building and parking expansion
7. Provide a high degree of personal safety for people entering and leaving the building, especially at night
8. Should be level, have favorable soil conditions and not contain unstable land formation and poor drainage
9. Allow for a one-story branch library that is at least 15,000 sq. ft. in size
10. A minimum of 3 miles from the closest library facility

Library Services

The Cortez Branch Library currently serves the western portion of the Southside planning area. This branch offers full library services including access to Internet and word-processing, children's materials and programs, services for young adults, materials and services in Spanish, and audio, video, and CD collections.

- **Cortez Branch Library, 2803 Hunter, (9,000 sq. ft.)**



(source: Library Facilities Master Plan; Nov. 1998)

The central portions of the Southside planning area fall outside of immediate Library Department service areas. Branch Library and Bookmobile service areas are currently defined as a three-mile radius around each location. Residents of this service area are nearest to the following library service locations:

- **Southside ISD Bookmobile, 19190 HWY 281 South**
- **Pan American Branch Library, 1122 Pyron Ave.**

The eastern portions of the Southside planning area fall outside of existing Library Department service areas. Branch Library and Bookmobile service areas are currently defined as a three-mile radius around each location. Residents of this service area are nearest to the following library service locations:

- **McCreless Branch Library, 1023 Ada.**
- **Southside ISD Bookmobile, 19190 HWY 281 South**



EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Community Health Services

The Metropolitan Health Department currently provides a wide range of services to all areas in the City and in the County. These services include:

- Investigation of public health related complaints including food borne illness, recreational water quality, and public swimming pools and spas, and investigation of toxic exposures
- Enforcement of the City's smoking in public places ordinance and the minor's access to tobacco ordinance
- Inspection of food establishments and child care facilities
- Investigation of reported elevated blood levels in children
- Animal services including leash law, pet licensing and rabies control
- Access to community health clinics
- Medical Assistance Program benefits
- Rodent and vector control consultation along with mosquito abatement and eradication



Existing Metro Health Clinics available to residents are located at:

- South Flores Clinic, 7902 South Flores
- Southwest Branch, 9011 Poteet-Jourdanton Highway
- Southeast Clinic, 3630 S.E. Military Drive

Currently there are no hospitals located within the planning area. The closest hospitals to the planning area are:

Hospital	Address	System	Distance
Southwest General Hospital	7400 Barlite at SW Military	Tenet Health System	2.5 Miles
Southeast Baptist Hospital	4214 E. Southcross	Baptist Hospital System	5.0 Miles

Community Fire Services

Currently, fire service is being provided to residents in the limited purpose annexation areas by volunteer fire departments. The SAFD provides fire and emergency medical service (EMS) to areas within the full purpose annexation limits.

The San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD) has, through its planning efforts, attempted to maintain a satisfactory level of emergency response across the entire City. The original Master Plan established a station location criteria that has been utilized not only for placing new stations, but also identifying areas throughout the City that lie in Extended Response Areas (ERA).



Location Standards

The goal is to locate facilities to allow the first arriving pumper within 4.25 minutes travel time of 90% of all City blocks. Travel time is defined as the time from when the fire unit leaves the station until its arrival at the scene.

As part of the Master Plan process, the SAFD focused on the ERAs. Each of these areas has been, and will continue to be, evaluated with regard to the following factors.

- Population
- Residential and Commercial structures
- Demographics
- Emergency call volume
- Total block records
- Area
- Average travel time
- Growth potential

Recommendations will be made yearly based on the evaluation of the preceding factors.



Implementation

Through the above-described analysis, the ERAs will be prioritized. Additional fire stations will be recommended in order to address the significant ERAs. Other strategies such as infrastructure improvements and traffic signal preemption will be considered in dealing with these ERAs. The SAFD has over 1,400 employees operating from 49 emergency fire stations and other non-emergency sites provide these services on a citywide basis. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection certifies all San Antonio firefighters.

Fire Protection

The San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD) provides the following emergency and fire prevention services to the citizens of the City of San Antonio:

- Fire suppression and rescue
- Emergency medical services (EMS) first response for San Antonio EMS Department on life-threatening medical emergencies



- Hazardous materials mitigation and regulation
- Emergency prevention and public education efforts
- Dive rescue
- Technical rescue
- Arson Investigation
- Aircraft/rescue/ firefighting
- Construction plan review
- Inspections
- Rescue/hazardous materials unit

Fire stations located closest to the area are as follows:

- **Fire Station #2 - 601 Gillette (1 mile)**
- **Fire Station #22 – 1100 March Dr (2 miles)**

Emergency Medical Service

In the limited purpose annexation area, EMS Service is provided through Bexar County's contract with AMS. In fully annexed areas, Emergency Medical Service (EMS) for the City of San Antonio provides the following emergency and safety services:

- Emergency dispatch, pre-arrival First Aid instructions and coordination of other public safety support agencies
- Emergency paramedic ambulance response
- Medical rescue services



The SAFD has EMS mobile service provider, with units constantly moving throughout the system. An ambulance is frequently dispatched from a location outside the station. EMS units may generally be moved from station to station when emergency demands peak in different locations of the City.

Current EMS locations closest to the planning area are :

- **Fire Station #36 – 5826 Ray Ellison**
- **Fire Station #22 - 1100 March Dr (2 miles)**

The SAFD provides emergency medical first response to all patients in a life-threatening situation. All Fire Department personnel are certified at the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level or higher and assist EMS personnel providing patient care.

Law Enforcement Services

The Plan area is currently provided law enforcement services by the Bexar County Sheriff's Department.

The San Antonio Police Department ("SAPD") will provide protection and law enforcement services in the new area upon the effective date of annexation. These services include:



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- Routine patrols and responses;
- Handling of complaints and incident reports;
- Special units, such as
 - Traffic enforcement,
 - Criminal investigations,
 - Covert operations,
 - K-9 Unit,
 - Family Assistance Crisis Teams,
 - Bomb Squad, and
 - Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT);
 - SAFFE (San Antonio Fear Free Environment)
- Any other services or programs provided to the citizens of San Antonio.



The City of San Antonio Police Department has the following substations located throughout the City:

The following Police Services are nearest to the Plan Area:

- **San Antonio Police South Substation – 711 Mayfield Drive**
- **San Antonio Police Academy – 12200 S. Loop 410 E.**

A goal of the Department is to respond to life threatening emergency calls within five minutes. The Police Department has 2,839 positions with 2,056 sworn police officers.

Location Standards

If annexed, the area will either become a new patrol district or part of an existing one based upon factors such as the size of the area, population, and the expected number of calls for service. These factors will also determine the need for hiring additional patrol officers to insure all patrol districts are adequately staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and to maintain an average response time comparable to other areas of the city. SAPD SAFFE officers will be available to meet with residents as requested to discuss police issues in the neighborhoods. Current substations locations include:

- **Central** **515 S. Frio**
- **North** **13030 Jones Maltsburger**
- **East** **3635 E. Houston**
- **West** **7000 Culebra**
- **Prue** **5050 Prue Rd.**

